

Ad Hoc DPW Planning Committee Meeting Minutes Draft

Date: Monday, December 14, 2009

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Millennium, Conference Room B

Participants: Mark Kost, Rose O'Donnell, Bob Price, Hugh Macguire, George Murray, John Cunningham, Kelly Ross, Val Wormell, Ellen Harde, Bob Carter, Chip Barrett

Introduction

Kost and Wormell introduced participants to the program designed to implement a joint vote of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to identify and implement a DPW-like cost saving in the FY11 Westford Town budget. The rationale behind the vote was the anticipated reduction in state aid for FY11 and the boards' desire to keep service at its present level. The program consists of 8 steps. The first step is to hear concerns from all boards, committees and commissions with the possible consolidation of departments into a Department of Public Works. The second step was to propose a vision and mission statement with the purpose of using the statements as guides and/or benchmarks for future action steps. In addition to hearing concerns, a business plan will be developed by Kost and presented to the joint boards.

Discussion

The participants began discussion by listing what the Town departments do right or what works.

What Works

- voluntary sharing
 - water department plows municipal facilities
 - water department supplies labor to drive Town plows
 - provide outreach to the schools on environmental issues
 - water department conducts food inspections for the Health Dept.
 - water department digs out fire hydrants for Public Safety
 - water department mows the landfill area
 - highway department responds to water main breaks
 - highway department supplies heavy trucks and hauls gravel for water main repair
 - highway department digs graves for Cemetery Dept.
- accomplishes much with a small staff
- snow removal is excellent
- water tastes good
- prepared for emergencies
- volunteerism

The participants listed areas for improvement.

Needs Improvement

- facilities maintenance
- outrun our competence on systems, i.e. HVAC

- preventative maintenance
- on-call contracts
- not leveraging buying power
- parts vs. specifications
- lack of a control center
- fleet maintenance
- lack of centralized procurement
- high per capita cost to provide services
- lack of conservation land maintenance

Vision Statement

Participants reviewed sample vision statements. A vision statement is the 10 year outlook. After much discussion, the following draft was proposed:

Westford prides itself in its ability to provide superior community services to its residents. In order to continue public services far into the future in an ever changing fiscal environment, Westford recognizes the requirement to improve efficiencies and economies.

The *** Department will provide Westford the highest quality and responsive municipal level of service in the most cost efficient and effective manner taking advantage of economies of scale across its infrastructure through proper utilization of assets, procurement, maintenance, application of new technologies and personnel.**

A future department name was purposely omitted. The final phrase lists the areas to address in the order the participants decided. Wormell and Kost were asked to write up the chart pad notes.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 22, 2009 at 7 p.m. in Millennium, conference Room B. The vision statement will be finalized and a mission statement started.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.